

fact sheet



Reauthorization of the Magnuson-Stevens Act

Issue: Data Collection/Science

Overview: In order to continue improving the fishery management process, it is critical to expand and enhance the collection and use of fisheries related information. This information includes the categories of biological, physical, and socioeconomic data. Not only will better data facilitate the expansion of ecosystem management of living marine resources, it will also aide in anticipating the effects of management measures on commercial and recreational fishers and their dependent communities. Additionally, observer data and information generated by vessel monitoring systems are increasingly used to monitor fishing operations and to support enforcement programs that will improve fisheries management.

Proposal: The Administration's Magnuson-Stevens Act (MSA) bill takes a broad and comprehensive approach to improving the collection and use of science and socioeconomic information, as well as the sharing of observer data.

(1) The bill strengthens the use of scientific information by mandating formalized scientific peer review during the Fishery Management Council (Council) process. The bill also authorizes the payment of stipends to scientists who serve on Council Scientific and Statistical Committees.

(2) The Secretary of Commerce (Secretary) is directed to establish a national data collection system. This system is expected to facilitate the collection of data, including observer data, to strengthen regulatory analyses completed by the Department of Commerce in support of fisheries management regulations.

(3) The bill considerably expands the categories of social and economic information that can be collected by the Secretary. This additional information will help improve the assessment of the socioeconomic impacts of management actions.

Purpose: These provisions of the Administration's MSA bill will improve the quality and credibility of scientific assessments that the Councils use in the fishery management process, and will provide the breadth and detail of data needed to better assess the socioeconomic implications of management measures.